

A small gift from you could make a big difference

As a patient with serious neurological conditions, I know that the Helpline & Information service provided by the Brain & Spine Foundation really does make a significant difference to people who feel isolated and uninformed about their conditions.

One in six people have a neurological condition. It can happen to anyone at anytime.

In 2011, I was a fit and healthy 46-year-old, working full-time as a Judge in Portsmouth, whilst also training for a charity place in the London Marathon 2012. To my knowledge, I had no health issues. Then, on the 8th September 2011, whilst exercising I collapsed and fell into the deepest coma. Thank goodness my daughter was by my side because I would have faced certain death, if I had been on my own.



At the hospital, my husband was told that my brain injury was unsurvivable without immediate brain surgery, as I had had a massive subarachnoid brain haemorrhage and a stroke from a ruptured giant aneurysm. The local neuro unit had no beds. They gave me a 10% survival chance. My husband was told to go home and tell the children, then aged 16 and 14 that "mummy would probably be dead by morning." Which he did. Miraculously, an intensive care bed was found and I had brain surgery through the night.

I remained in a coma for two weeks, with my family not knowing if, or when, I would wake up. And even if I did wake up, how much of the old me would be left?

When I did come round, I had no memory of anything from the point of collapse. I was then transferred back to my local hospital and after only 9 days, I was discharged home. I was paralysed and mostly blind when I went home; I wasn't even told by a doctor that I'd had a stroke.

I relearned how to walk, and even how to run, but my sight never returned and never will. I am registered partially sighted with hemianopia, and will never drive. I live with constant pain which medication cannot resolve. I have chronic fatigue and very poor sleep, caused by the pain and poor temperature regulation. My senses of hearing, taste and touch have all been affected but no-one can see this. I have had knee surgery twice as the weakness down my paralysed side has caused me to over-rely on my other leg which has meant my kneecap has been worn out and I am now waiting for further knee surgery. I have had many falls and my running days are over having fallen and damaged my knee further.

please turn over

I will make a difference this Christmas

I enclose

☐ £22.47
(1 hour)

☐ £44.94
(2 hours)

other: £_____ to fund a helpline officer

I enclose a cheque/charity voucher/postal order made payable to the Brain & Spine Foundation or please debit my card using the details below:

☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐ Other: _____

Card no:

Expiry date:

Cardholder's name: _____ Date: _____

Please tick the appropriate box:

giftaid it

☐ I am a UK taxpayer* ☐ I am not a UK taxpayer

Title _____ First name _____
Last name _____
Address _____

Postcode _____
Email _____

By choosing to give us your postal address and email above (both are optional) you agree that we can keep you updated on our work and how you can help us through donating, fundraising, campaigning and volunteering. You can change your mind at any time by calling **020 3096 7880** or emailing **info@brainandspine.org.uk**

We promise to respect the information you give us.

You can see our privacy statement at

<https://www.brainandspine.org.uk/privacy-policy-and-cookies/>

*I am a UK taxpayer and I would like the Brain & Spine Foundation to treat this donation and any donations I make in the future and have made in the past 4 years as Gift Aid donations, until I notify you otherwise. With this declaration, the Brain & Spine Foundation can reclaim 25p of tax on every £1 that I give. I understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year, it is my responsibility to pay any difference. Please remember to write your full name and home address to allow us to claim Gift Aid

Those are the physical issues, but my psychological problems have been even worse. I have travelled to the depths of despair and lost hope, no longer wanting to live. I desperately wanted to return to the job I loved, and after a 15-month phased return I had to stop working.

I am 53 and still married to my wonderful, supportive, husband Dinshaw, and my marriage has been tested to the limits and my relationships with my two daughters have been badly affected. My whole family has been terribly traumatised by what has happened to me.

In 2016, I heard that the Brain & Spine Foundation were putting on a conference about subarachnoid haemorrhage. I was immensely impressed with the thought which had been put into it and the range of subjects covered. I know every other person affected felt the same. The conference brought survivors together, gave them information and hope.

Since then, I have been a regular friend of the Brain & Spine Foundation Facebook page. I have tried to be a helpful friend to those who post on its pages with problems, concerns, and just worries which they don't know what to do with, no matter what stage of recovery they have reached. I hope I can be a help to others because of my extensive experience in the last seven years.

I have a clear empathy of what it is like to survive but not to thrive, after a brain haemorrhage. Thankfully the support of the Brain & Spine Foundation helps with isolation and despair. I am now privileged to be a trustee of the Brain & Spine Foundation. My aim is to provide personal and extensive experience of a serious neurological condition to the charity to better outcomes for survivors of life-changing events.

To ensure that survivors do not just survive, they also thrive.



The Brain & Spine Foundation's most recent survey found that 82% of individuals felt more informed and 55% of people felt more able to manage daily life after accessing the service. When considering the impact of symptoms such as pain, headaches, memory loss and visual impairment, the positive effect of the helpline is more than evident.

Will you make a difference?

It costs £22.47 per hour for a helpline officer to answer calls providing, specialist support and information to anyone affected by neurological conditions.

I am so grateful if you've read this far, and would be even more grateful if you could consider making a real difference by supporting the helpline service, or the Brain & Spine Foundation generally. At a time when presents are often neither needed, wanted or appreciated, if you could donate anything to the Brain & Spine Foundation today, I can assure you that your support would make an amazing difference to funding a vital service which receives no state funding. Your donation would be the most powerful, appreciated gift you could make this year.

Wishing you very happy holidays and a wonderful 2019,

Yours sincerely

Lizzie Printer

Lizzie Printer



I would like to give a regular gift

I'd like to give a regular gift of £3 £5 £10 £20 Other £ per month, starting (dd/mm/yyyy) until further notice.

Name of bank account holder: Name of bank or building society:

Billing address: Branch address:

Postcode: Postcode:

Branch Sort Code: Account number:

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Signature: